

12.135 REPORTING FALSE ALARMS ON A FORM 315

References:

Chapter 807, Cincinnati Municipal Code:
Alarm Businesses and Alarm Systems
City of Cincinnati Ordinance 108-5
City of Cincinnati Ordinance 448-1986
Standards Manual 82.2.1

Purpose:

Establish the Alarm Response Report (Form 315) as the uniform method for documenting a false holdup, burglar, audible, or panic alarm.

Improve the effectiveness of alarm systems.

Reduce the number of false alarms.

Document false alarms resulting from defective alarm equipment and/or subscriber negligence.

Provide information for determining fees.

Policy:

Division personnel will respond to and investigate all audible, burglar, holdup, and panic alarms. Officers will exercise due caution when investigating these alarms and shall continue to do so until the alarm is proven to be false.

The Division may impose fees for multiple false alarms from the same user pursuant to Cincinnati Municipal Code, section 807.

Procedure:

A. Alarm Response Report (Form 315):

1. A Form 315 will be completed for the following false alarms:
 - a. Signal 6: holdup alarm
 - b. Signal 66: direct line holdup alarm
 - c. Signal 7: burglar alarm
 - d. Signal 77: recorded burglar alarm
 - e. Robbery Apprehension Program (RAP) alarm

- 1) In addition to completing a Form 315, the investigating officer will immediately contact the Criminal Investigation Section desk with the false RAP alarm information.
- f. Audible alarm on structures
- g. Panic alarm
- h. Panic alarm from vehicles
 - 1) These include audible or silent duress alarms activated by a vehicle occupant and transmitted to an alarm company. They do not include audible alarms indicating vehicle tampering or break-in.
2. Do not complete a Form 315 for:
 - a. Offenses that will be documented on a Cincinnati Uniform Incident Report.
 - b. An alarm activated by an officer during the investigation of a Place Found Open (PFO) (see Section B.).
 - c. A false fire box alarm.
 - d. An audible tampering alarm from a vehicle.
3. Preparing a Form 315:
 - a. The following information is mandated by the city alarm ordinance. Record all information neatly and accurately (PRINT). Form 315 is reference material for alarm appeal hearings and municipal court.
 - 1) DATE - Date of dispatch.
 - 2) TIME - Time of dispatch.
 - 3) DISTRICT/BEAT - Location where the alarm occurred.
 - 4) NAME - Record the full name of the business or resident subscriber.

- 5) ADDRESS - Be specific. Include the zip code to allow for proper billing of the subscriber.
- 6) APARTMENT, BUILDING, ETC. - In addition to the street address, include the apartment number, building number, etc.
- 7) ALARM LOCATION - Record, if known, the exact location of the alarm (i.e. front door, 1st floor rear window, etc.).
- 8) SIGNAL - Record the proper signal for the type of alarm. (Refer to Section A.1.a through g.)
- 9) ALARM COMPANY - Record only if known (e.g., information from Police Communications Section (PCS), owner or company representative).
- 10) ALARM COMPANY RESPONDED - Check the appropriate block.
 - a) If an alarm company representative responds while the police are at the scene, record the name of the individual.
- 11) OWNER/REPRESENTATIVE NOTIFIED - On alarms where an owner/representative is notified while the police are present, record the individual's name and obtain their signature. They will receive the third copy of the Form 315 when completed.
- 12) OFFICER NAME, BADGE NUMBER - Enter the notifying officer's name and badge number. (PRINT)
 - a) If unable to notify at the time of the alarm, the original will be forwarded to Fiscal and Budget's Alarm Enforcement Unit (AEU). The second and third copies are forwarded to the affected district. The district COP Sergeant will assign the two copies to an officer for notification within seven days.

(An extension may be required for extenuating circumstances.)
Upon completion, the COP Sergeant will forward the second copy through channels to AEU. The third copy is given to the owner or representative at the time of notification.

- 13) ABLE TO SEARCH PREMISES - Check the appropriate block describing the extent of the search.
- 14) K-9 - Note the involvement of a canine team, if applicable.
- 15) CAUSE - This is the reporting officer's judgment, based upon known facts and observations while at the scene. Use additional comments if needed.
- 16) WEATHER - Check the appropriate block based upon the officer's observations at the time of dispatch and arrival.
- 17) OTHER COMMENTS - This space is available for any relevant information. For example, the reporting officer may note an area-wide power outage at the time of the alarm. Report any information which will help the subscriber improve the alarm system. Use the back of the form if necessary.
- 18) REPORTING OFFICER - Provide the name, rank, and badge number of the reporting officer. This officer need not be the officer dispatched or first at the scene. However, the reporting officer must have been on the scene during the alarm investigation.
- 19) SUPERVISOR - The reviewing supervisor will check the form for completeness and accuracy, then sign his name, rank, and badge number.

NOTE: Under Cincinnati Municipal Code, Section 807-11, alarm users are responsible for multiple false alarms sent by alarm systems on premises under their control.

If alarm users have problems with their alarm system, they should contact their alarm company representative immediately. Failure to correct the problem can lead to the assessment of administrative fees. Users having excessive false alarms could face misdemeanor charges.

The paragraphs above are printed on back of Form 315 and should be noted to alarm users.

4. Routing the Form 315:
 - a. Using interdepartmental mail, the collator will forward the completed Form 315 to the Fiscal and Budget Section daily.
 - b. The Fiscal and Budget Section will:
 - 1) Review each Form 315 for completeness and accuracy.
 - 2) Compare the report with the Police communication Section computerized summary of alarms.
 - a) If a Form 315 is not received, notify the affected unit commander.
 - 1] The unit commander will take the necessary action to ensure the Fiscal and Budget Section receives the required Form 315.
 - 3) Correct the Form 315 as necessary.
 - 4) Enter the Form 315 into the Fiscal and Budget Section's computerized file.

- 5) Keep the original Form 315 on file and on a monthly basis check original unsigned Form 315's with those that have been received from the COP Sergeants.
 - 6) On a monthly basis, provide the COP Coordinator with a list of all Forms 315 that are over 14 days old.
 - 7.) Charge alarm users for false alarms as authorized in City Ordinance 448-1986.
 - 8) On a monthly basis, provide the COP Coordinator with a list of all locations with multiple alarms for follow up.
- B. When Burglar Alarms are Activated by Officers Checking a Place Found Open:
1. Do not complete a Form 315.
 2. Complete a Form 317 titled "Place Found Open".
 - a. In the section titled "Action Taken," state the investigating officer activated the alarm while searching the premises.
 3. Using interdepartmental mail, the reporting officer will forward a copy of the Form 317 to the Fiscal and Budget Section.
 4. The Fiscal and Budget Section will not score this alarm against the alarm user.

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